the 8th Five Year Plan period. The amount allocated to Bihar under the Accelerated Rural Water Supply Programme (ARWSP) was Rs. 282.18 crore. Due to the under-utilisation of funds, the State Government was able to absorb only Rs. 161.704 crore, against which the final expenditure reported was Rs. 142.259 crore.

(b) 3663 not covered and 18319 partially covered habitations are likely to be covered and provided with safe drinking water facilities in the State by the end of this century.

National Social Assistance Programme

87. MISS SAROJ KHAPARDE: Will the Minister of RURAL AREAS AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that even the first instalment of money under the National Social Assistance Programme could not be released to Maharashtra in 1996-97 because of non fulfilment of necessary conditions by the State;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof; and

(c) the remedial measures Government propose to take in this regard to ensure that programme does not suffer in the State?

THE MINISTER OF RURAL AREAS AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI K. YERRANNAIDU): (a) and (b) During 1996-97, under National Old Age Pension Scheme (NOAPS) Rs. 83.12 lakhs was released only to two districts namely Dhule and Ratnagiri and under National Family Benefit Scheme (NFBS) Rs. 17.00 lakhs was released only to Dhule district of Maharashtra and no funds under National Maternity Benefit Scheme (NMBS) were released to any district of Maharashtra. Other districts of the State could not furnish the utilisation certificates for even 50% of amount released in 1995-96. (Maharashtra was released Rs. 13.80 crores for NOAPS, Rs. 6.07 crores for NFBS and Rs. 3.62 crores for NMBS during 1995-96). Consequently, out of allocated funds during 1996-97 of Rs. 79.40 crores (46.96 crores for NOAPS, Rs. 20.54 crores for NFBS and Rs. 11.90 crores for NMBS) only the above amount i.e. Rs. 1 crore could be released for all the three schemes.

(c) The Ministry of Rural Areas & Employment has taken several remedial steps such as:—

(i) Meeting with State Minister in charge of NSAP;

(ii) Chief Minister of Maharashtra was addressed to improve the implementation of NSAP;

(iii) Letters have been written to concerned district authorities, the Chief Secretary and Nodal Secretary for better implementation of NSAP. These letters are being closely followed up.

(iv) State Government has been requested to give wide publicity to the three schemes of the NSAP;

(v) Frequent review meetings at the level of Chief Secretary, Nodal Secretary and concerned officials of the State Government are being held; and

(vi) Central Government is publicising the programme over National Network of Television and All India Radio.

Centrally Funded Scheme for Villages artisans in Maharashtra

88. MISS SAROJ KHAPARDE: Will the Minister of RURAL AREAS AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are implementing any centrally funded scheme to promote traditional crafts and occupations of village artisans such as fishermen, boatmen (mallah) oil mongers (telis) and potters (Kumhars) in Maharashtra to make the village occupations economically viable;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if answer to part(a) above be in the negative, whether Government propose to initiate a long term programme for these occupations in the State with cooperation of the State Government?

THE MINISTER OF RURAL AREAS AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI K. YERRANNAIDU): (a) The Ministry of Rural Areas & Employment implements two schemes for the benefit of the rural poor viz., Supply of Improved Toolkits to Rural Artisans (SITRA) and Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDF). Both these schemes are implemented in the entire country including the State of Maharashtra. SITRA covers all traditional rural artisans below the poverty line including potters (Kumhars) but other than weavers, tailors, needleworkers and beedi-workers. Fishermen, boatmen (Mallah) and oil-mongers (telis) can be covered under IRDP.

(b) Under SITRA, the rural artisans below the poverty line are given improved toolkits to enable them to enhance the quality/quantity/marketability of their products and reduce their drudgery. The average cost of a toolkit is Rs. 2000/- and the exact unit cost is to be fixed by the DRDA concerned. The artisans are rquired to contribute 10% of the cost of the toolkits as their contribution with the balance 90% being met as subsidy from the Government of India. The use of power driven toolkits upto the cost of Rs. 4500/- has also been permitted under the scheme.

Under IRDP, loans are given to the rural poor families with a view to providing them with self employment through income generating activities. Each assisted family is also given subsidy ranging from 25% to 50% of the loan amount. The scheme allows for a flexible design of investment.

(c) Does not arise.

Diversion of funds allocated to States under JRY

89. SHRI BHAGABAN MAJHI: Will the Minister of RURAL AREAS AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have received complaints from any State regarding diversion of funds allocated to those States under the Jawahar Rozgar Yojana (JRY).

(b) if so, the number of complaints received during 1997-98; and

(c) Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF RURAL AREAS AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI K. YERRANNAIDU): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) A complaint has been received for diversion of Jawahar Rozgar Yojana (JRY) funds to State sponsored "Janam Bhoomi Scheme" in Andhra Pradesh.

(c) Government of Andhra Pradesh have reported that funds under JRY are being released to the Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) i.e Zilla Parishads, Mandal Parishads and Gram Panchayats strictly as per the guidelines issued by the Government of India. No funds under JRY have been diverted to Janam Bhoomi Programme in Andhra Pradesh.

Employment for women in the rural areas

90. SHRIMATI JAYANTI PATNAIK: will the Minister of RURAL AREAS AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether any emphasis has been laid by Governmnet to generate more employment for women in the rural areas while implementing various programmes in ther rural areas; and

(b) if so, the achievement in that regard in respect of women beneficiaries in various States during last five years?

THE MINISTER OF RURAL AREAS AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI K. YERRANNAIDU): (a) To create opportunities for Socio-economic development of women and to bring them into the mainstream of development in